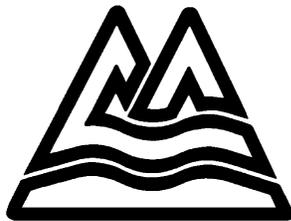


Multnomah County Contractor Satisfaction Survey

Good Government Benchmark Analysis
Multnomah County, Oregon



Department of Support Services

DECEMBER 1998

www.co.multnomah.or.us/budget/eru/index.html

Multnomah County

Contractor Satisfaction Survey

December 1998

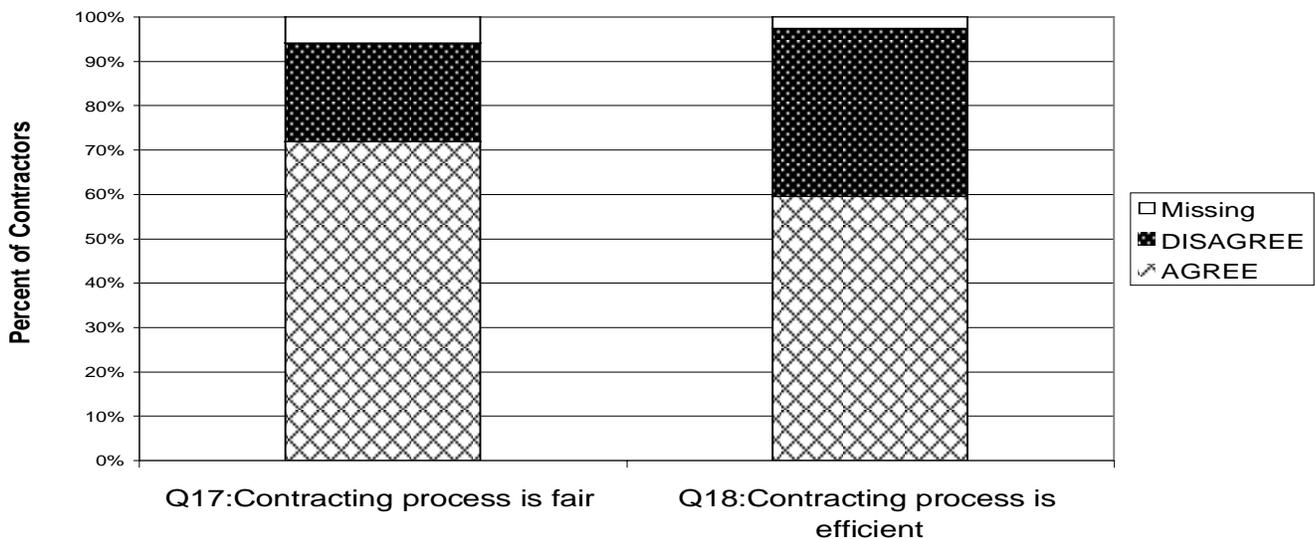
Dear Multnomah County Contractor,

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the December 1998 Contractor Satisfaction Survey. One hundred fifty-three of you sent in completed surveys. This is a 24% response rate, which is good for a mail out survey of this type.

This questionnaire, which was mailed to 650 of you, grows out of the RESULTS (Reaching Excellent Services Using Leadership and Team Strategies) initiative. RESULTS is our effort to continuously improve our outcomes and the efficiency of our processes. In this case, we hope to improve our contracting process. By improving the contracting process we hope to improve not only the efficiency of government but to improve the quality of services to our citizens.

Overall, I am pleased by these results. Seventy-two percent of you agreed that the contracting process is fair; 60% agreed that the contracting process is efficient. While these results are promising, they are not good enough. There is room for improvement. Next year we shall re-survey to see if we have improved.

OVERALL SATISFACTION



In the following pages there is more detail showing your response in specific areas such as how we plan for contracts, negotiate them, monitor them, and reimburse you. Along with these we have included sixteen draft service guidelines by which we hope to continuously improve our performance.

I invite you to work with us in our commitment to improve contracting with Multnomah County and to make these service guidelines become a reality.

Sincerely,

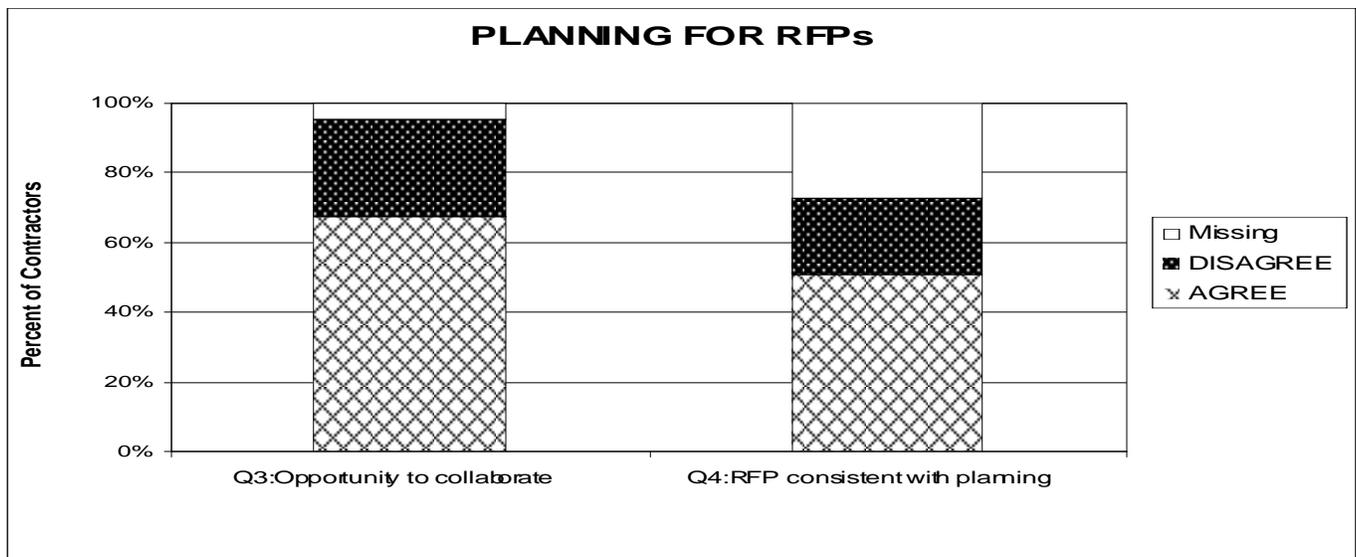
Beverly Stein,
Chair Multnomah County

Multnomah County's Contracting Process

The County solicits proposals from potential contractors by distributing an RFP (request for proposals). All proposals that meet minimum qualifications are then rated, the highest scoring proposal(s) selected, the contract(s) developed, and signed. Contractors submit data to monitor contract fulfillment and reimbursement is made. Following are the detailed questionnaire results for each of these steps.

I. Planning for Requests for Proposals

Sixty-seven percent of you agree that your agency has ample opportunity to collaborate with the County in planning the service system in which you participate. Fifty-one percent agree that the final contract clearly follows from the planning sessions in which you participate.

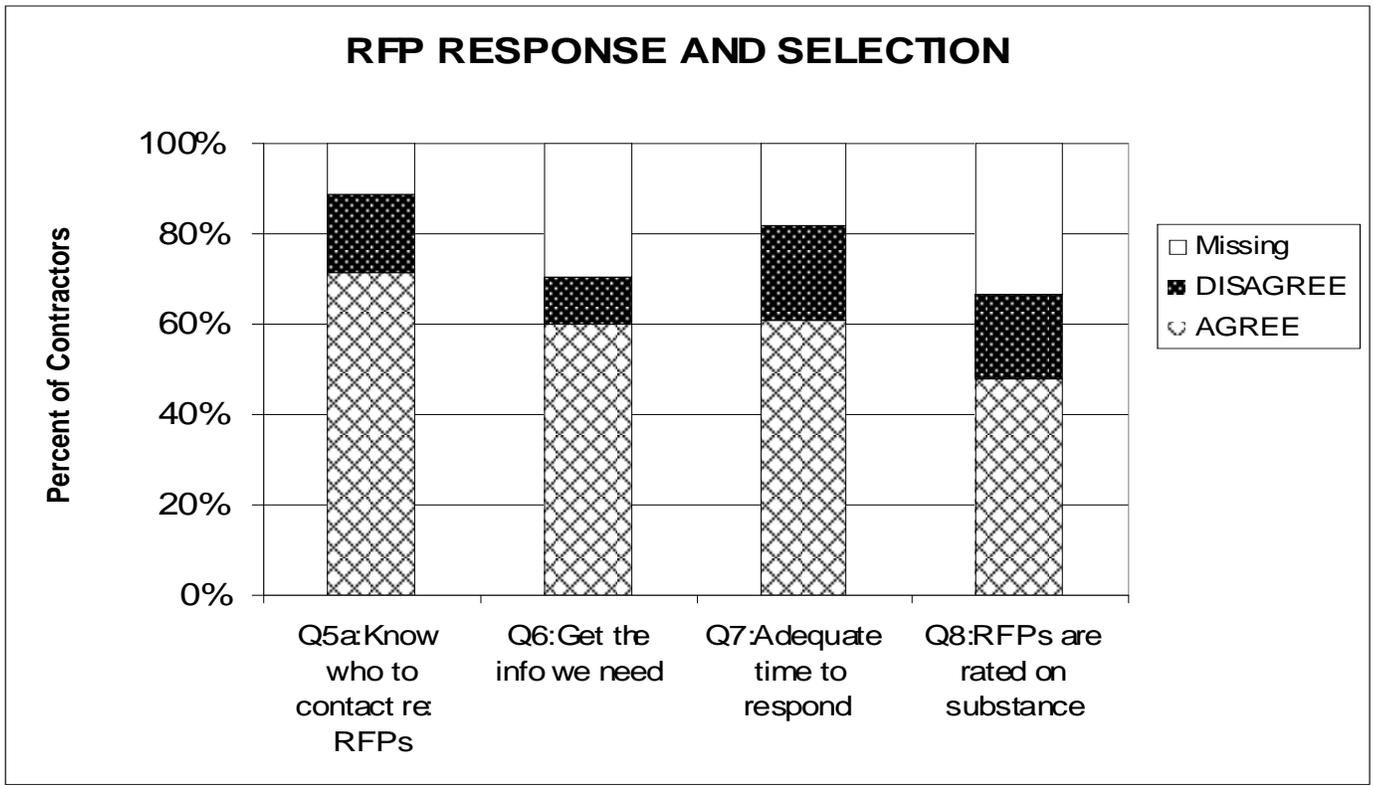


Proposed Service Guidelines, Part I:

1. Each department shall designate which RFPs will go through a planning process and which will not. If there is a planning process the following guidelines apply:
 - a. All interested stakeholders are invited to participate in service delivery planning, e.g., systems issues, policy development, and service priorities.
 - b. The decision-making process and authority will be clearly outlined at the beginning of the planning process.
 - c. The draft assumptions and guiding principles which will guide the planning process are stated explicitly, such as: why the service is being contracted; how it relates to the rest of the service system; funding or policy mandates; the duration of the contract; and renewal provisions.
 - d. Provider input shall be completed at least one week prior to the department forwarding the RFP to the County Purchasing Section.
 - e. Actual drafting of the RFP language shall exclude individual contractors to avoid any potential proposer from having an advantage.
2. RFPs shall specify the degree of flexibility in negotiating the final statement of work. Any significant negotiated changes to the proposers submitted statement of work shall be documented and submitted to the County Purchasing Officer for review prior to contract execution.

II. RFP Response and Selection

Seventy one percent of you know whom to contact regarding RFPs during the response and selection process. About 60% of you feel you get the information you need to prepare your bid, and have adequate time to respond. Only 48% of you feel the RFPs are rated on substance of the proposal; a third of you indicate you don't know.



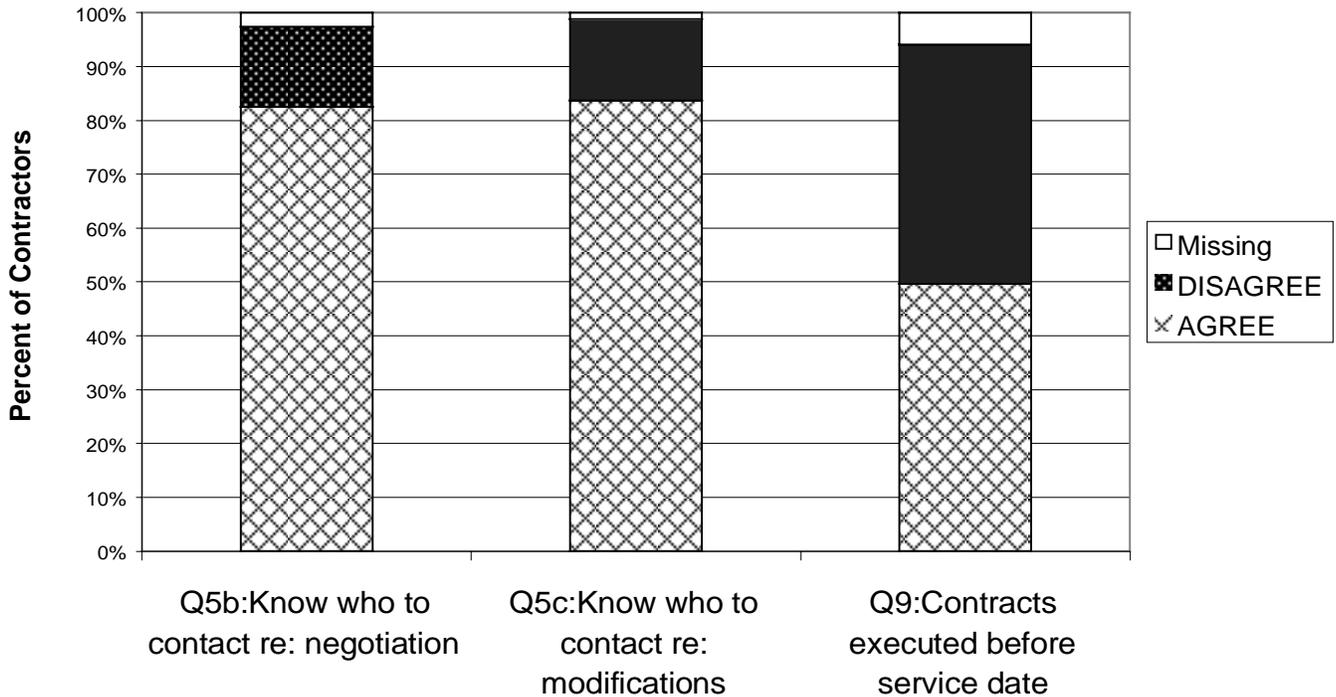
Proposed Service Guidelines, Part II:

3. The County routes all RFP questions through the County Purchasing Section to ensure that questions are answered without giving any proposer unfair advantage.
4. County RFPs shall allow collaborative proposals unless the department prohibits them for a particular RFP. Specific legal and contractual requirements of collaboration shall be defined in the RFP. In general, collaboration means the involvement of two or more parties to provide an optimal range and integration of services.
5. The Department of Community and Family Services offers one administrative qualification compliance process (QVSA) for all County human service Class II contracts (Class II = contracts of \$50,000 or more). All Departments use this process to determine proposers' administrative qualifications. (Note: Fiscal compliance is still done separately by department. Departments may ask for additional program management information specific to each RFP.)
6. The County shall allow a minimum of 4 weeks to respond to an RFP. All questions about the RFP must be submitted to the County Purchasing Section no later than 2 weeks before the due date of the proposal. Purchasing must respond to these questions no later than 1 week before the due date of the proposal. If an addendum makes a substantive change to the RFP specifications as determined by the County Purchasing Officer a minimum of 2 weeks shall be allowed from the date of the addendum's issuance to the proposal due date.
7. Instructions shall clearly differentiate musts from guidelines in preparing RFP responses. Evaluation of the RFP responses shall be on substantive issues such as program model, cost, and provider qualification and experience.

III. Contract Development

Over 80% of you know whom to contact for contract negotiation or modifications. Only 50% report that contracts are executed prior to the service start date.

CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT



Proposed Service Guidelines, Part III:

- 8. Departments shall allow contractors a reasonable time to negotiate, review, and approve the statement of work and other contract details. The scope of these negotiations shall be within the limits specified by the RFP.
- 9. Each department shall specify a primary liaison for each contract who is responsible for assuring that contractor problems are resolved.
- 10. All contracts shall be executed prior to the start of services.

IV. Contract Implementation

Eighty-two percent of respondents agree that contract requirements are understood by their agency.

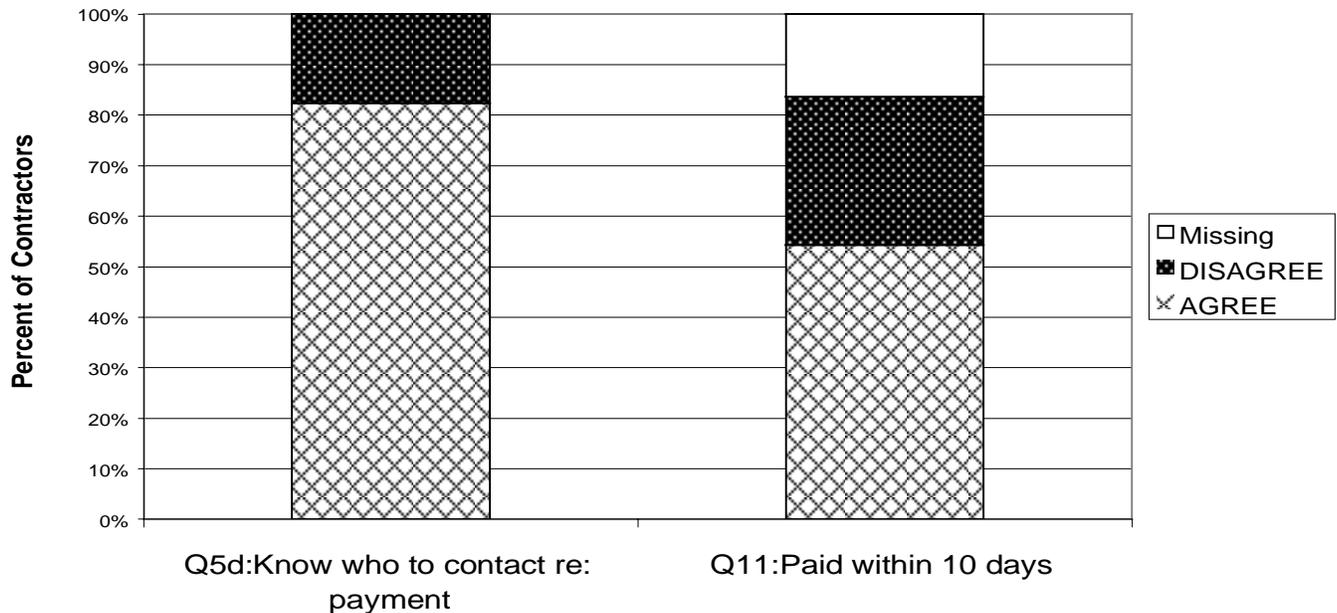
Proposed Service Guidelines, Part IV:

- 11. Contracts shall include reference to all basic assumptions and requirements, e.g. reporting requirements, matching, advances, consequences of over and under provision of service, coming in under budget.

V. Payment

Eighty-two percent responded that you know whom to contact if there are questions about payment issues. Only 54% responded that you get paid within 10 days of submitting the invoice. After comparing the initially considered 10 day payment standard against commonly accepted private sector practices of 30 days, the Contract Steering Committee has determined that 30 days is a more reasonable service guideline for the County to adopt.

PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT



Proposed Service Guidelines, Part V:

12. Flexibility in payment methods is desirable to allow the fairest and most appropriate payment method to be used. Departments shall clearly specify in each RFP the method of payment such as flat rate, fee-for-service, or achievement of specified outcomes. Fee-for-service contracts may set specified target outcomes but failure to reach those targets may not be used to withhold payment for services delivered.

13. Payment shall be made within 30 calendar days of submission to the department if documentation is complete. Contractors shall be notified of any deficiencies in billing documentation within 10 days of submission.

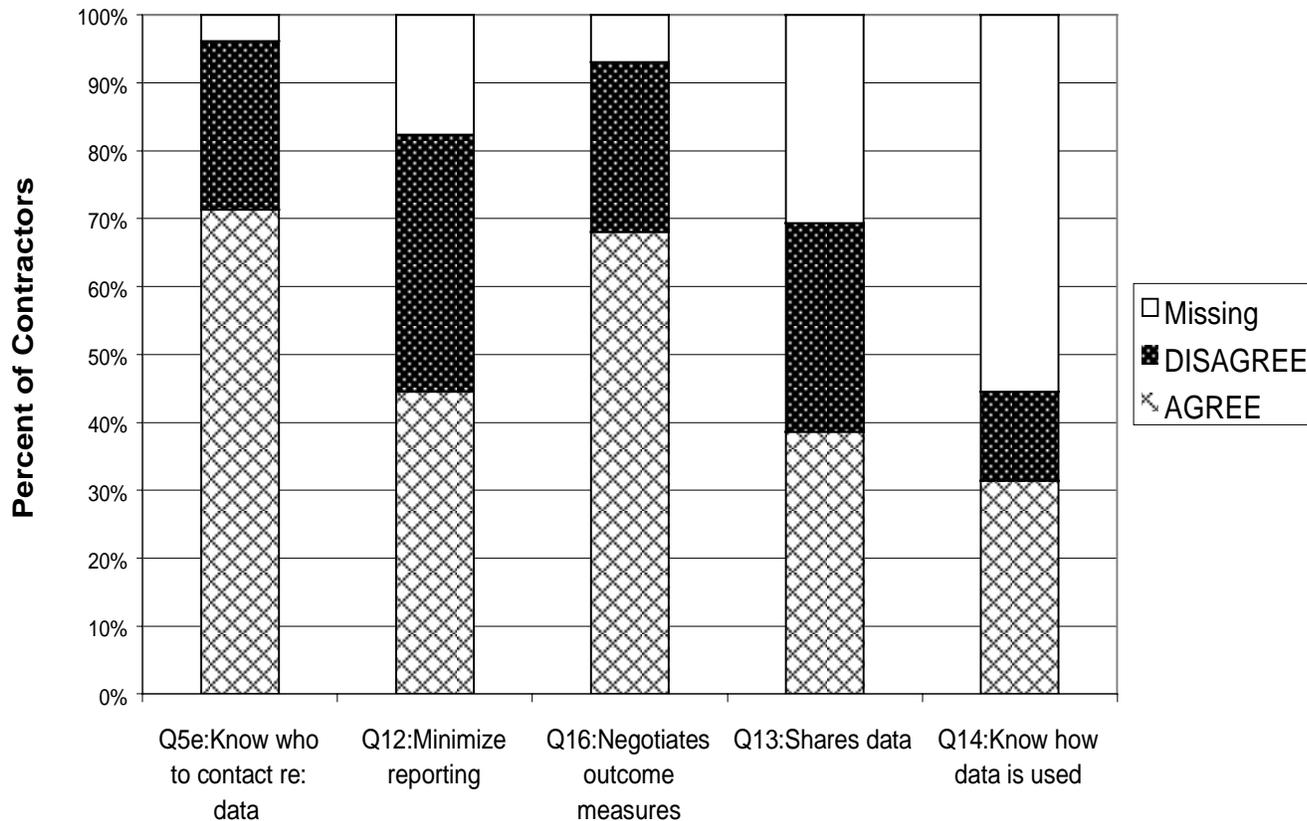
VI. Contract Monitoring

Data collection that is required by the county to monitor contract compliance is the biggest source of dissatisfaction identified by this survey:

- a. 71% agree that you know whom to contact regarding data collection requirements;
- b. 44% of you agree that the County tries to minimize additional unique requirements by considering provider's existing reporting requirements (18% didn't know or didn't respond to this question);
- c. 80% of you have outcome measures in your contract; 68% of those with outcome measures agree that the County negotiates with your agency to determine those measures;

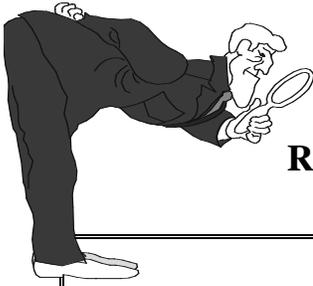
- d. 39% agree that the County shares contract-monitoring data with providers; 31% don't know or didn't respond;
- e. 31% of you agree that the County uses contract-monitoring data; 56% didn't know or didn't respond.

CONTRACT MONITORING



Proposed Service Guidelines, Part VI:

14. The County shall, when possible, accept reports used by other funders or shall negotiate use of reporting formats or data elements prepared for other funders. The County's intent is to eliminate unnecessary redundancy between Departments and other major funders.
15. Data submitted by a contractor and which is routinely summarized into contract monitoring reports shall be shared with that contractor. A contractor's proprietary information shall not be shared with other contractors.
16. The County shall inform contractors how data is used in management and evaluation of programs.



Detailed Results by Question

Rank Ordered Beginning with the Most Positive Response

SURVEY QUESTIONS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	MEAN*
Contract requirements are clearly understood by our agency	153	2.46
My agency can get the information it needs from County program staff in order to prepare its proposal.	108	2.49
Overall, my agency is satisfied with the fairness of the County's contracting process.	144	2.82
My agency has ample opportunity to collaborate with the County in planning the service systems in which we are involved.	147	2.90
The RFPs to which we respond clearly follow from the planning sessions in which we participate.	111	2.93
There is adequate time to respond to the RFP.	125	2.94
RFPs are evaluated on relevant content and the overall substance/ merit of the proposal.	102	2.96
The County uses contract-monitoring data submitted by providers.	68	2.97
The County collaborates/negotiates with our agency to determine the outcome measures which are included in our contract.	123	3.07
The County responds within ten days to reimbursement requests.	128	3.26
Overall, my agency is satisfied with the fairness of the efficiency of the County's contracting process.	149	3.32
The County tries to minimize additional unique requirements by considering provider's existing reporting requirements.	126	3.52
Our contracts are executed prior to the service start date.	144	3.58
The County shares contract-monitoring data with providers.	106	3.59

Notes:

- 1. 153 responses were received. If a lower number is reported above, it means the response was either missing or marked "don't know".**
- 2. A lower Mean (average) indicates a more positive response.**
The scoring system was 1= strongly agree; 2= agree; 3= mildly agree; 4= mildly disagree; 5= disagree; 6= strongly disagree.